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April 21, 2020

Andrew Wheeler
Administrator
Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20460

Re: Opposition to the agency's unlawful rollback of enforcement.

Dear Administrator Wheeler:

Consistent with my correspondence of March 30th of this year. I again write to express serious concern regarding the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA's) March 26 memorandum announcing that the agency will cease all enforcement actions during the coronavirus pandemic. This action is wholly inconsistent with the spirit and the letter of the law, including the Clean Air Act, the Clean Water Act, CERCLA, the Endangered Species Act, the Coastal Zone Management Act and the National Environmental Policy Act.

As a representative of a constituency which had experienced more than its share of the negative impacts of historically unchecked industrial pollution, including environmental, economic and public health impacts, it is outrageous to me that the administration would attempt to use one international public health emergency to pursue a dangerous, unwarranted and unlawful policy that, if sustained, could ultimately result in a cascade of new, local public health crises all across the nation.

In my own constituency, the federal government just paid more than \$80 million for the removal of 60,000 truckloads of contaminated sediment from the Buffalo River and related clean-up work. This has resulted not only in environmental improvements but a whole new array of recreational uses and has fostered \$428 million in private-sector investment along the river. All that good work over decades can now be wasted as this policy turns a blind eye to new and ongoing point-source pollution, re-contaminating what we paid so dearly to clean in the first instance.

Again, I cannot express enough how shortsighted and ill-advised this policy is, and urge its immediate reversal.

Sincerely,



Brian Higgins
Member of Congress